

VZCZCXRO5413
OO RUEHBW
DE RUEHRL #0508 1140857
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 230857Z APR 08
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0981
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 000508

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/22/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [PGOV](#) [MK](#) [GR](#) [GM](#)
SUBJECT: GERMANY SUPPORTS U.S. EFFORTS ON MACEDONIAN NAME
ISSUE

REF: STATE 40462

Classified By: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR JEFF RATHKE. REASONS: 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) Pol-mil/external chief delivered reftel points to MFA South Europe Deputy Office Director Felix Klein and Greece Desk Officer Gabriele Scheel April 18, to MFA NATO Deputy Office Director Gunnar Denecke April 21 and to MFA Western Balkans Office Director Joachim Bleicker April 22.

¶2. (C) All three MFA offices emphasized that Germany shared U.S. disappointment over the Greek veto of Macedonia's invitation to NATO at the Bucharest Summit and agreed it was important to stay engaged on this issue. They noted that both Chancellor Merkel and FM Steinmeier had been very active in the days leading up to the summit, and at the summit itself, in trying to convince Greek PM Karamanlis and FM Bayoyannis to show more flexibility on the name question. Western Balkans Director Bleicker said, in fact, that Merkel had "felt alone" in pushing this matter in Bucharest, since the only other country that appeared to be doing so was the United States. Bleicker said it was especially notable that France had decided to give Greece a pass on this question.

¶3. (C) South Europe Deputy Klein and Greece Desk Officer Scheel noted that the Greeks clearly expected their EU and NATO partners to stand "closer to them" on the name issue than to Macedonia, which made it difficult to exert too much pressure on Athens. Klein and Scheel also noted that this issue was literally a question of survival for the coalition government in Athens since it only had a one-seat majority in parliament. At least one previous Greek government had fallen on this issue, so it was to be expected that Athens would continue to move very cautiously. Given the high-level attention to this issue at Bucharest, they thought it best to back off for now and give the two parties, with the help of Amb. Nimetz, the space to negotiate. Perhaps in a couple of weeks, once there was something concrete to support, it would make sense to intervene.

¶4. (C) Meanwhile, Bleicker said the name issue in general would continue to figure prominently in FM Steinmeier's talking points whenever he meets his Greek and Macedonia counterparts. However, Bleicker expected the Greeks to deflect pressure for now by claiming that nothing can be negotiated with Macedonia until after a new government is formed in Skopje following June 1 parliamentary elections.

TIMKEN JR